

January, 2010

Donn's Desk:



Part of the new Strategic Plan that VIA developed this past year was identifying five major goal areas for the next four years. Two of these goals are growing VIA's ministry so that we can serve more individuals needing help and developing partnerships with new churches to expand our services and ministry. This involves working with the broader Christian community in engaging more volunteers to be loving neighbors in our communities.

We believe that ministering in partnership with other Christian service organizations and churches creates unity and helps provide more effective services to those needing help. VIA has partnered with a number of other ministries such as DenverWorks, CRWRC and CRWRC Disaster Response, Joshua Station, Confluence Ministries and Westside Christian Fellowship. We are currently forming a partnership with Living Waters International; an organization that drills water wells to provide clean drinking water in developing countries.

VIA staff has been contacting and surveying other like-minded churches to determine if by working together we might be able to serve others better and have a greater impact in the community. Thank you for volunteering, supporting and praying for the growing work of Volunteers in Action.

Donn Hansum, Director

January is *National Mentoring Month*.

It is the time each year when our nation spotlights the importance of mentors who volunteer their time to someone who may not have another healthy, caring individual in their lives. Mentors have an ability to listen, offer friendship, guidance, and encouragement. They make a difference. Last year, Partners for Success mentor volunteers contributed over 400 hours to men and women seeking employment through the DenverWorks job search programs. Many are former offenders transitioning back into society. The challenges are numerous; their struggles are real.

One mentee commented on her mentor, "*She is MY friend. I can talk with her. We prioritize my goals.*" And a former offender said, "*My mentor is top notch. I am no longer just hearing the negatives in my life. He cares about my life.*"

As VIA volunteers, we invest our lives in someone else in the hope that God will use us to impact that person in a positive way. To all our volunteer mentors, "**Thank you for your investment. It is a gift!**" —Donna Van Elderen, Program Manager, Partners for Success

Our Mission: *Volunteers in Action serves the community by equipping and enabling Christian volunteers and churches to be Christ's transforming presence.*

“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” --Micah 6:8

When VIA reexamined its Value Statements this past year, we added and reaffirmed social justice (to act justly) as an organizational value. VIA has a goal to be an informer and educator about some of the pressing issues in our world where people are suffering because they are being exploited and disempowered. Our hope is to bring a biblical voice to the discussion and offer some suggestions for action. We understand that recommended solutions to some of these issues can be controversial, but we believe that our command “to act justly and love mercy” calls us to learn, dialogue about, and act against injustice in our world.

We are thankful that we can get some guidance from other Christian organizations in this area such as the Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice (OSJ) and Sojourners. Some issues where biblical justice comes to play include: Creation Care, Domestic Poverty, Fair Trade, Health Care Reform, Assisting Refugees, Immigration, Religious Persecution, and Simple Living.

For example, 2010 brings a good opportunity for our country to address and pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislation. Because our present US immigration system has many problems, there is a need to pass good and fair policies. The OSJ advocates for Comprehensive Immigration Reform which would “keep families together, provide an earned path to legalization, enforce laws humanely, protect workers and their families and address immigration’s root causes”. Please encourage and pray for your congress persons, that they would work together to pass good, fair and just immigration legislation. More information can be found at www.crcjustice.org, click on “issues” and then “immigration.” —Donn Hansum, Director

VIA Financial Report Jan-Dec 2009

Budgeted Income & Expenses:	\$183,700
Actual Income:	\$173,162
Actual Expenses:	\$177,637
Shortfall:	\$4,475)

Thank you to everyone who gave to VIA throughout 2009. Our goal for our **2009 Partners in Ministry Campaign** was to raise \$30,000 and the total received was \$37,753. This included all monthly and year end campaign donors. Your support is sincerely appreciated and is a blessing to many!

CHECK OUT OUR NEW BLOG AT:
www.volunteersinaction.info/blog

VIA is also on **Facebook**:
Become a Fan!

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Tools for Benevolence Workshop – Feb. 25

Helping people who are struggling financially with a hand-up rather than a hand-out is the focus of this workshop planned for Thursday evening, Feb. 25 at 7:00 pm. All deacons and any other interested individuals are invited and welcome to attend. The Ordination form for deacons says that we should, “realize that benevolence is a quality of our life in Christ and not merely a matter of financial assistance”. This workshop will be held in the conference room next to VIA’s office at 9185 E. Kenyon Ave. #130, Denver. Please call 303-713-9144 if you would like to attend.

Foundation For VIA: SPRING FUNDRAISING DINNER

Save the date now! For **April 8** at the Hilton Garden Inn in the Denver Tech Center.

Partners for Success Mentor Training - Apr. 21

6:30 to 8:30 pm at DenverWorks.

This is the second of the 4 training sessions that will take place this year.

Social Justice Mini Conference—May 1

Plan to join us for a morning of education and exploring some of today’s issues where we can “act justly” on behalf of those who are vulnerable in our world.

Service Project—May 8

We will be serving the seniors in the Platt Park neighborhood.

Current needs in the Faith in Deed Program include:

- Reading mail to a blind woman in Parker.
- Visiting and providing support to a woman living in the Allied Jewish apartment complex in Denver.
- Taking two women without transportation grocery shopping near I-25 and Colorado Blvd.

All of these are approximately a twice a month time commitment. Please contact Rachel if you are interested in giving in this way.